



# Education Watch

Enhancing Accountability, Local Control, & Parental Choice ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman  
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## VT Gov. Seeks Accountability Detour at Poor Students' Expense

Vermont Gov. Howard Dean (D) suggested yesterday his state should turn down nearly \$25 million in federal aid to Vermont's poorest students rather than be held accountable for improving student achievement in its public schools.

The bipartisan *No Child Left Behind Act*, signed into law in January by President Bush, requires states that accept federal education funds to prove to parents, voters, and taxpayers that those funds are being used effectively to raise student achievement. The new bipartisan law enjoys strong popular support nationwide, but Governor Dean -- who's reportedly mulling a run for president -- calls the idea "terribly flawed." (*Toppo, Associated Press, April 19, 2002*)

While Dean claims the new law may cost his state "\$50 or 60 million" to implement (*Toppo, AP*), a February study by the Washington-based group Accountability Works estimates implementing the tests will cost the average state between \$6.1 million and \$7.6 million. Furthermore, states are hardly being asked to pay for the tests on their own; the federal government is providing \$387 million this year alone for states to develop and implement their tests (an average of more than \$7 million per state).

A quick overview of what Vermont children and teachers stand to lose under their governor's plan: \$24.9 million in federal Title I aid to poor students; \$13.6 million in teacher quality grants to help Vermont train, recruit and retain quality school teachers; \$2.4 million for the President's new Reading First initiative to support reading instruction for children based on proven scientific research; and \$2.3 million in Safe and Drug Free Schools grants to help make Vermont schools safer for its children

The new law also provides a significant boost in local control, giving local school officials in Vermont much greater flexibility in the use of federal education funds. Every school district in Vermont can make spending decisions with up to 50 percent of its non-Title I funds under *No Child Left Behind*.

### News of the Day

**Parents, voters and taxpayers deserve to know that education funds are getting results for our children.**

- ❑ *Since 1965, the federal government has spent more than \$130 billion on K-12 education programs. States have gladly accepted the funds, but have never been held accountable for results.*
- ❑ *Consequently, the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers across America has remained wide.*
- ❑ *In 2001, President Bush united lawmakers in Congress to bring this era of unmet promises to an end by enacting the bipartisan No Child Left Behind Act (H.R. 1).*

### DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- Vermont's local school districts receive unprecedented new freedom and flexibility under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, including the ability to make spending decisions with up to 50 percent of their non-Title I funds without first obtaining the approval of the U.S. Department of Education.
- The *No Child Left Behind Act* benefits an estimated 104,559 Vermont public school children, 359 Vermont public schools, and 8,710 Vermont teachers.
- Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, Vermont public schools will receive nearly \$25 million in federal aid.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"We must hold schools accountable for improving the performance of our students, and this bill does that. It also gives parents opportunities to rescue their children from failing schools. We don't improve by lowering expectations so more people can meet the standards." -- Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee (R) on signing of President Bush's bipartisan No Child Left Behind Act, January 9, 2002*